CAPTAIN ATOM
CDC
85
MARCH

CAPTAIN ATOM

12¢

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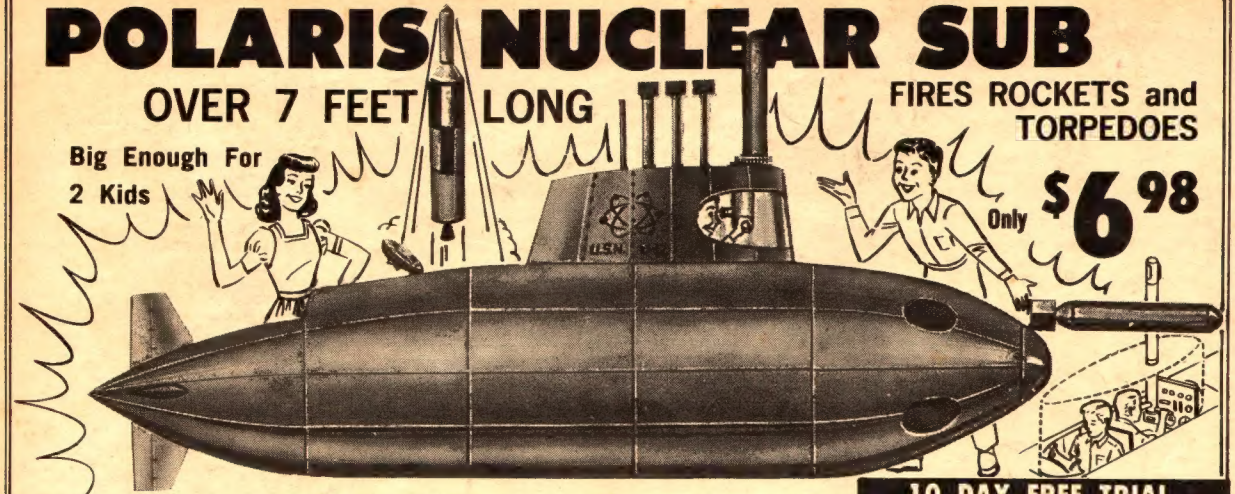
POLARIS NUCLEAR SUB

OVER 7 FEET LONG

Big Enough For 2 Kids

FIRES ROCKETS and TORPEDOES

Only $6.98



SPECIAL FEATURES

- Over 7 feet long
- Seats 2 kids
- Controls that work
- Rockets that fire
- Real periscope
- Firing torpedoes
- Electrically lit Instrument panel

How proud you will be as commander of your own POLARIS SUB — the most powerful weapon in the world! What hours of imaginative play and fun as you and your friends dive, surface, maneuver, watch the enemy through the periscope and fire your nuclear missiles and torpedoes! What thrills as you play at hunting sunken treasures in pirate waters and exploring the strange and mysterious bottom of the deep ocean floor!

HOURS AND HOURS OF ADVENTURE

Sturdily constructed of 200 lb. test fibreboard. Comes complete with easy assembly instructions. Costs only $6.98 for this giant of fun, adventure and science. (Because of the POLARIS SUB'S giant size we must ask for 75c shipping charges.)

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CAPT. ATOM

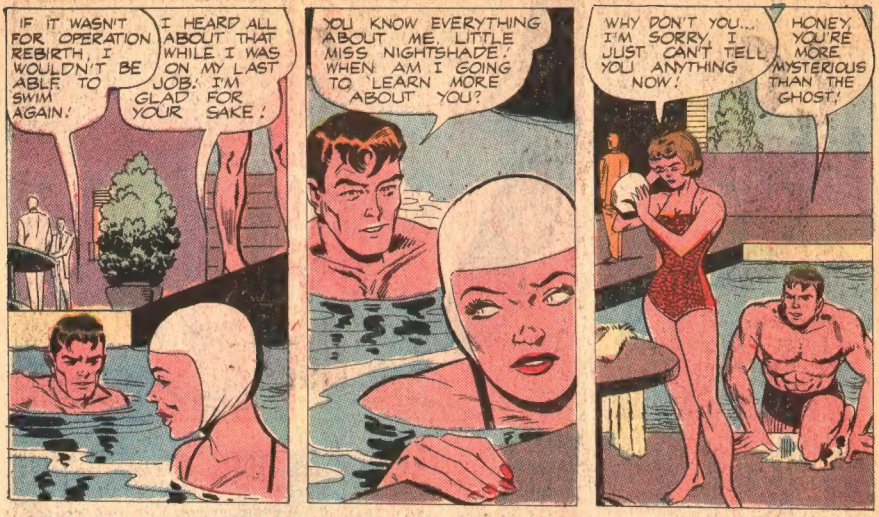
ONE BY ONE, IMPORTANT SCIENTISTS ARE SPIRITED AWAY BY TWO NEW THREATS TO THE NATION'S SECURITY. PUNCH, WILY AND WARPED BY DREAMS OF POWER; JEWLEE, A LOVELY SCHEMER WITH STRANGE POWERS, ARE BEHIND THIS WILD PLOT! AND CAPTAIN ATOM FINDS IT TAKES MORE THAN SUPER POWERS AND CLEVER GADGETS WHEN HE AND NIGHTSHADE ARE CAUGHT IN THE...

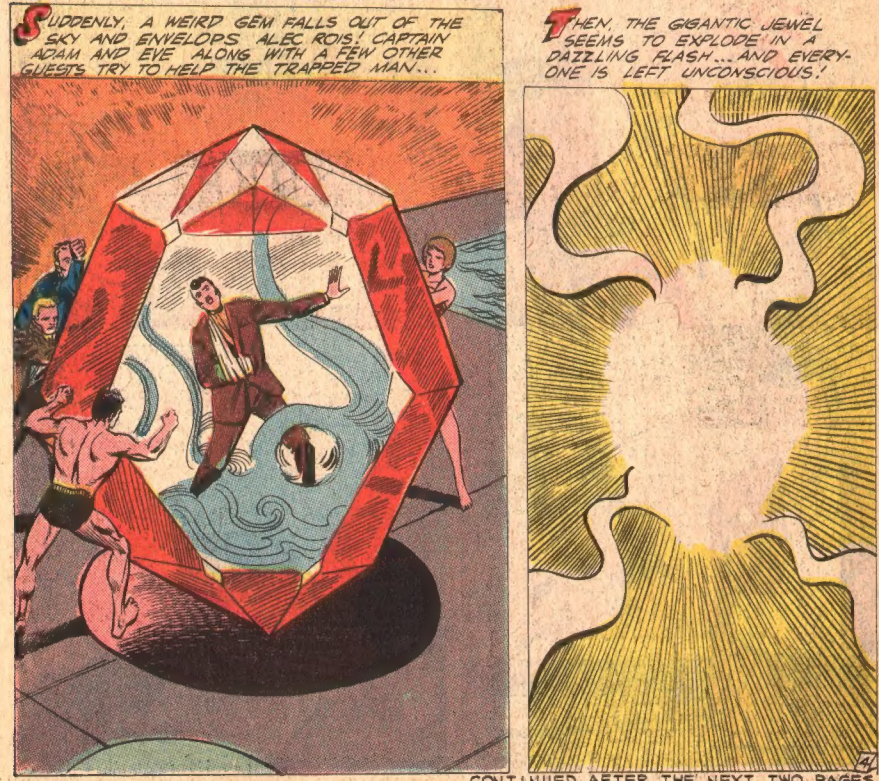
STRINGS OF PUNCH & JEWLEE

CAPTAIN ATOM Vol. 2, No. 85, March, 1967, published bimonthly by Charlton Comics Group at Charlton Building, Derby, Conn. 06418. Second Class postage paid at Derby, Conn. 06418.

A BRIGHT SUNNY DAY ON A GOLF COURSE...
SNIK!
SHE'S KNOCKED IT INTO THE ROUGH AGAIN!
WHAT'S SHE DOING ON A GOLF COURSE?
I GUESS I'M HOLDING YOU MEN UP! IF YOU HELP ME FIND MY BALL, I'LL LET YOU PLAY THROUGH!
THAT SOUNDS GREAT!
AS PROFESSOR BOLT LOOKS FOR THE BALL...
SHOULD BE AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE!
THERE IT IS! BUT WHAT'S THIS?
IT LOOKS LIKE A RUBY, BUT...
WHA... WHAT'S GOING ON!
WH-WHATEVER IT IS... I'VE GOT TO GET MYSELF FREE...
SUDDENLY...
AYYEE
2

FOOL! THE STRINGS OF PUNCH PACK AN ELECTRICAL WALLOP! HA! HA! HA! DIDN'T THINK MY STRINGS WOULD STING!
PUNCH! DON'T STUN HIM SO MUCH OR I'LL NEVER GET HIM UNDER MY POWER!
YOU MUSTN'T RESIST MY BEAUTIFUL JEWEL! THERE'S SUCH A QUIET SLEEP WITHIN IT! SLEEP, PROFESSOR BOLT, SLEEP!
WHILE PUNCH TAKES THIS ONE AWAY IN THE CAR, I'LL GO AND CHARM HIS FRIEND, THE OTHER SCIENTIST, WITH ANOTHER OF MY PRETTY BAUBLES!
LATER THAT AFTERNOON, NEWS OF THE MISSING SCIENTISTS REACHES SOME FAMILIAR FACES IN WASHINGTON...
WITH ALL THESE... WHAT THE! WHO'S SPLASHING?
FORGET THE HEADLINES AND GET WET, FLYBOY!
BETTER OBLIGE HER, CAPTAIN! EVE USUALLY GETS HER WAY AND I CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITH THIS ARM!
AND ONCE THIS ARM IS HEALED, THE GHOST WILL APPEAR AGAIN!
Captain Atom "62, remember?
GOT YOU BY YOUR JET SET HEELS, EVE!
3


IF IT WASN'T FOR OPERATION REBIRTH, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SWIM AGAIN!
I HEARD ALL ABOUT THAT WHILE I WAS ON MY LAST JOB. I'M GLAD FOR YOUR SAKE!
YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME, LITTLE MISS NIGHTSHADE! WHEN AM I GOING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOU?
WHY DON'T YOU... I'M SORRY, I JUST CAN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING NOW!
HONEY, YOU'RE MORE MYSTERIOUS THAN THE GHOST!


SUDDENLY, A WEIRD GEM FALLS OUT OF THE SKY AND ENVELOPS ALEC ROIS! CAPTAIN ADAM AND EVE ALONG WITH A FEW OTHER GUESTS TRY TO HELP THE TRAPPED MAN...
THEN, THE GIGANTIC JEWEL SEEMS TO EXPLODE IN A DAZZLING FLASH... AND EVERY-ONE IS LEFT UNCONSCIOUS!
4

CONTINUED AFTER THE NEXT TWO PAGES

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with 25 missiles

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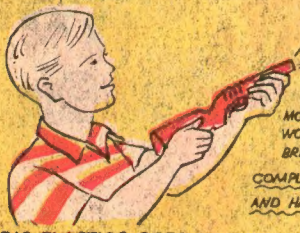

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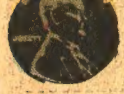

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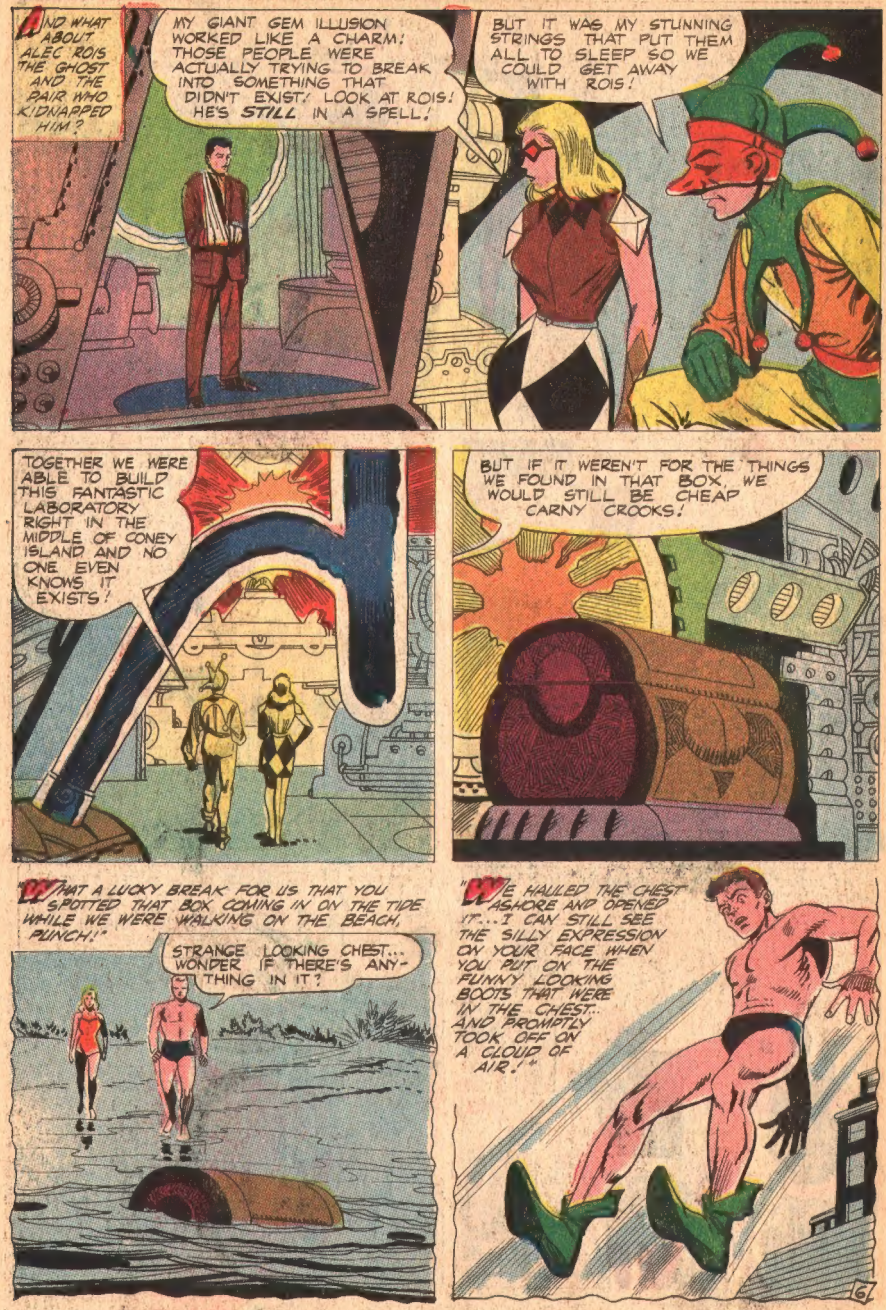
NAME.----------AGE-----

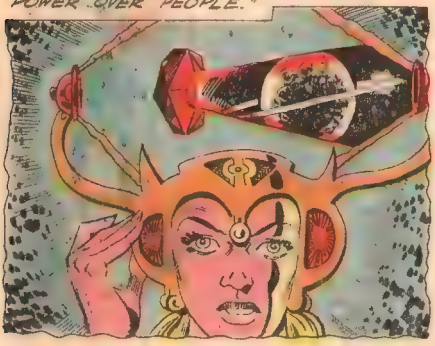
ADDRESS.----------

CITY.-------STATE.----ZIP.---

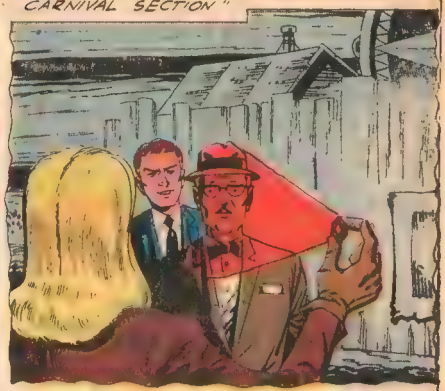
LATER, RECOVERING THEIR SENSES, THE PAIR CONTACT THE AUTHORITIES AND THEN LEAVE FOR THE PENTAGON WHERE THEY MEET AGAIN... THIS TIME IN ACTION TOGS!
NICE REPORT WE HAVE TO MAKE! WE WERE RIGHT THERE AND WE WERE HELPLESS! ALEC JUST DISAPPEARED!
LET'S SEE WHAT THE CHIEF WANTS US TO DO BEFORE WE START FEELING SORRY FOR OURSELVES!
AFTER GIVING THEIR CHIEF A FULL REPORT...
THAT'S THE SAME STORY ALL THE OTHERS GAVE US! WELL ROIS' HOUSE IS GUARDED BY RADAR AND NOTHING AS LARGE AS THAT GEM WAS PICKED UP: YOU PEOPLE WERE HYPNOTIZED!
WHAT?!
I'D LIKE TO KEEP YOU TOGETHER ON THIS CASE, BUT HIGHER-UPS HAVE MADE THAT IMPOSSIBLE! CAPTAIN ATOM IS TO FLY TO UPSTATE NEW YORK AND UNDERGO A SERIES OF TESTS ON HIS POWERS AND THE RADIATION MATERIAL UNDER HIS SKIN!
NIGHTSHADE, YOU TAKE YOUR NEW AIR-CUSHION VEHICLE AND FLY UP TO LONG ISLAND TO THAT GOLF COURSE WHERE BOLT DISAPPEARED! PERHAPS YOU'LL DIG UP SOMETHING NEW THERE!
BUT WHAT ABOUT ALEC ROIS?
WE'LL HAVE TO FORGET ABOUT HIM UNTIL WE LEARN MORE ABOUT THOSE MEN IN NEW YORK!
I WONDER WHAT ALEC'S GOING THROUGH RIGHT NOW?
I'LL HURRY WITH THOSE TESTS SO WE CAN GET AFTER WHOEVER HAS ALEC! MAYBE WE'LL GET TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE!
LIFE'S LITTLE IRONIES TWO PEOPLE ANXIOUS TO SAVE A FRIEND, BUT IF THAT FRIEND, WHO IS REALLY THE GHOST, KNEW WHO THEY WERE, HE WOULDN'T HESITATE TO DESTROY THEM!
5


AND WHAT ABOUT ALEC ROIS THE GHOST AND THE PAIR WHO KIDNAPPED HIM?
MY GIANT GEM ILLUSION WORKED LIKE A CHARM! THOSE PEOPLE WERE ACTUALLY TRYING TO BREAK INTO SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T EXIST! LOOK AT ROIS! HE'S STILL IN A SPELL!
BUT IT WAS MY STUNNING STRINGS THAT PUT THEM ALL TO SLEEP SO WE COULD GET AWAY WITH ROIS!
TOGETHER WE WERE ABLE TO BUILD THIS FANTASTIC LABORATORY RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF CONEY ISLAND AND NO ONE EVEN KNOWS IT EXISTS!
BUT IF IT WEREN'T FOR THE THINGS WE FOUND IN THAT BOX, WE WOULD STILL BE CHEAP CARNY CROOKS!
"WHAT A LUCKY BREAK FOR US THAT YOU SPOTTED THAT BOX COMING IN ON THE TIDE WHILE WE WERE WALKING ON THE BEACH, PUNCH!"
STRANGE LOOKING CHEST... WONDER IF THERE'S ANY-THING IN IT?
"WE HAULED THE CHEST ASHORE AND OPENED IT... I CAN STILL SEE THE SILLY EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE WHEN YOU PUT ON THE FUNNY LOOKING BOOTS THAT WERE IN THE CHEST.. AND PROMPTLY TOOK OFF ON A CLOUD OF AIR!"

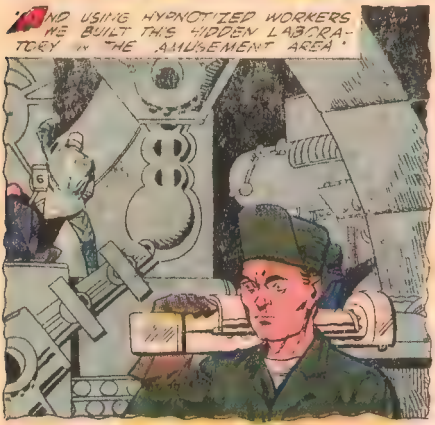
"AND THAT MIND RECORDER DEVICE THAT WAS FILLED WITH INFORMATION ON HOW TO USE THE HYPNO-GEMS AND THE STING STRINGS THAT WERE ALSO IN THE CHEST, GAVE ME SPECIAL POWER OVER PEOPLE."



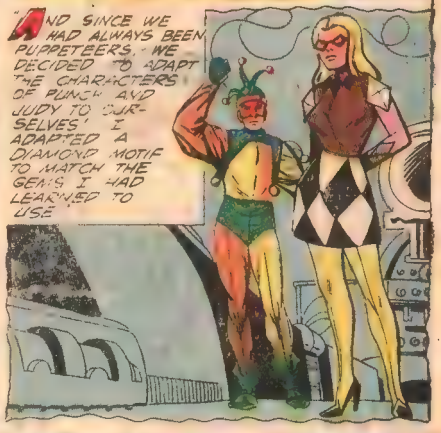
"WITH THE GEMS, I CHARMED A REALTOR INTO GIVING ME THIS ABANDONED CARNIVAL SECTION."



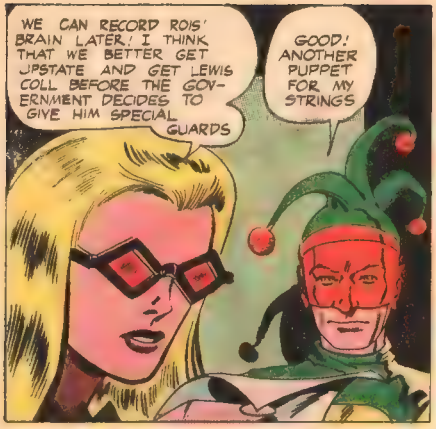
"AND USING HYPNOTIZED WORKERS WE BUILT THIS HIDDEN LABORATORY IN THE AMUSEMENT AREA."

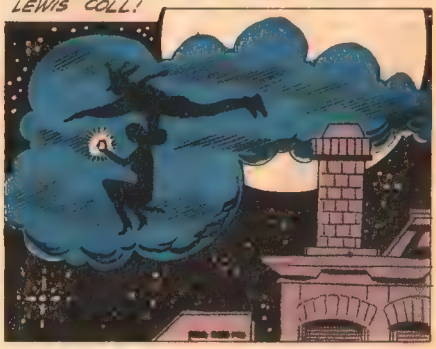


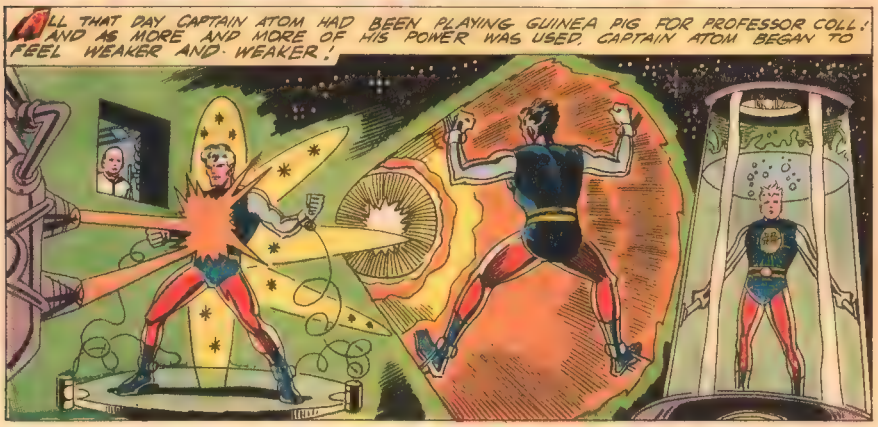
"AND SINCE WE HAD ALWAYS BEEN PUPPETEERS, WE DECIDED TO ADAPT THE CHARACTERS OF PUNCH AND JUDY TO OURSELVES. I ADAPTED A DIAMOND MOTIF TO MATCH THE GEMS I HAD LEARNED TO USE

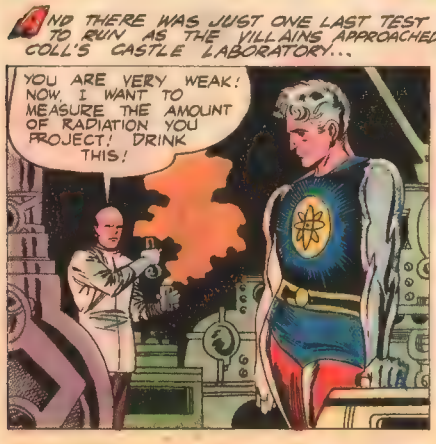


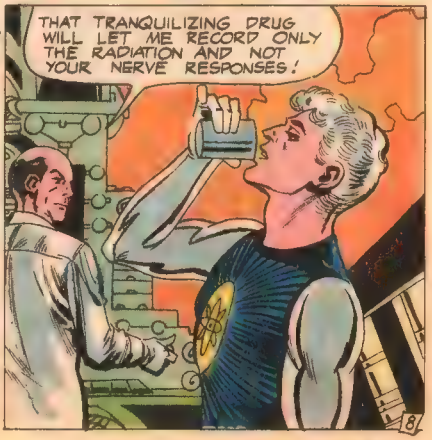
"AND SO, BY A STROKE OF FATE, A BOX OF RARE WEAPONS FROM A STRANGE CIVILIZATION LED TO THE BIRTH OF 'PUNCH AND JEWELEE'! ... I WONDER WHERE THAT CHEST DID COME FROM?


WE CAN RECORD ROIS' BRAIN LATER! I THINK THAT WE BETTER GET UPSTATE AND GET LEWIS COLL BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO GIVE HIM SPECIAL GUARDS
GOOD! ANOTHER PUPPET FOR MY STRINGS


USING THE FLYING SHOES AND THE COVER OF ONE OF JEWELEE'S GEMS WHICH ENVELOPED THEM IN DARKNESS, THE PAIR SET OUT TO CAPTURE ANOTHER SCIENTIST, LEWIS COLL!


ALL THAT DAY CAPTAIN ATOM HAD BEEN PLAYING GUINEA PIG FOR PROFESSOR COLL! AND AS MORE AND MORE OF HIS POWER WAS USED, CAPTAIN ATOM BEGAN TO FEEL WEAKER AND WEAKER!


AND THERE WAS JUST ONE LAST TEST TO RUN AS THE VILLAINS APPROACHED COLL'S CASTLE LABORATORY...
YOU ARE VERY WEAK! NOW, I WANT TO MEASURE THE AMOUNT OF RADIATION YOU PROJECT! DRINK THIS!


THAT TRANQUILIZING DRUG WILL LET ME RECORD ONLY THE RADIATION AND NOT YOUR NERVE RESPONSES!

YOU'VE USED MUCH OF YOUR POWER, CAPTAIN! BUT ALREADY YOUR SYSTEM IS BUILDING UP A NEW SUPPLY! BUT TO USE IT NOW WOULD BE A GREAT STRAIN ON YOU!
WHAT WAS THAT?
GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN! AH, CAPTAIN ATOM... THIS IS AN UNEXPECTED SURPRISE!
KKRASSH!
I'LL STOP...YOU IF... I CAN SHAKE... THE EFFECTS... OF THIS...DRUG ...TOO WEAK!
COME! LET ME STRING YOU ALONG ALSO, CAPTAIN ATOM!
SHOCKING MEETING YOU HERE! HO, HO, HO!
CUT THE GAY REPARTEE! COLL IS UNDER THE DREAM SPELL AND WE'D BEST GET BACK!
WAIT, JEWELEE! THIS IS ONE PUPPET I HAVE TO HAVE! IF WE KEEP HIM UNDER THAT DRUG WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CONTROL HIM AND LEARN THE SECRET OF HIS POWERS ALSO!

CONTINUED AFTER THE NEXT PAGE

48" "TALKING" MONSTER from Outer Space

Full of shivers of delight! Imagine the amazement and shock of your friends when they hear him talk. This is a lovable monster for you to command. To make him talk, just use the special design instrument. He bounces on his big feet .... wobbling, teetering, bending in every direction.

COLORFUL, ONE-PIECE QUALITY LATEX
ORDER SEVERAL SETS NOW! GUARANTEED
TO DELIGHT OR YOUR MONEY BACK.

$1 EACH plus 25¢ for postage and handling

MONEY BACK IF NOT SATISFIED

REGENCY MAIL ORDER, Dept. CH-MGK
Box 826, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Please send me "TALKING" MONSTERS at $1.00 for each, plus 25¢ postage and handling.

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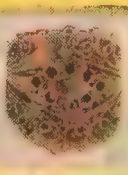
BOYS! ... GIRLS!

HERE'S A REAL CONVERSATION PIECE

IT'S NEW... AND DIFFERENT!!

ANTIQUE CIGAR BAND RING



Special Purchase!

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Ring is pictured actual size.

Antique **CIGAR BAND RING**

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ACT NOW!!...MAIL COUPON TODAY!!

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MY RING SIZE IS: ☐ SM. ☐ MED. ☐ LG.

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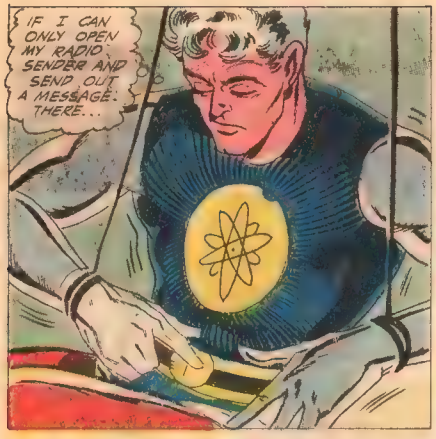
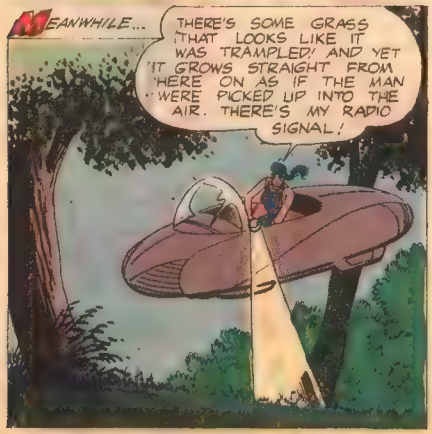

IF I CAN ONLY OPEN MY RADIO SENDER AND SEND OUT A MESSAGE! THERE...

MUSTN'T FIDDLE WITH MY STRINGS, CAPTAIN WEAK ATOMS! THERE, THAT SHOULD KEEP YOU ASLEEP UNTIL WE GET HOME!

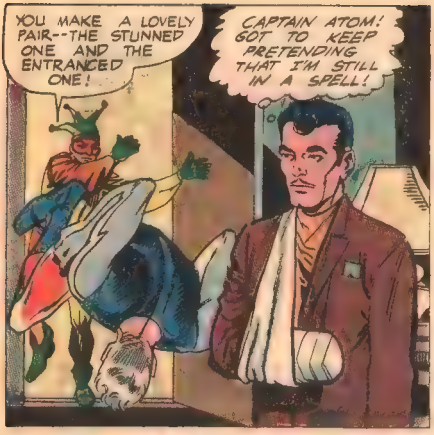
ISN'T IT SWEET OF COLL TO HAVE US TAKEN HOME IN HIS PRIVATE CHOPPER"
IT WILL SAVE SOME STRAIN ON MY FLYING SHOES!

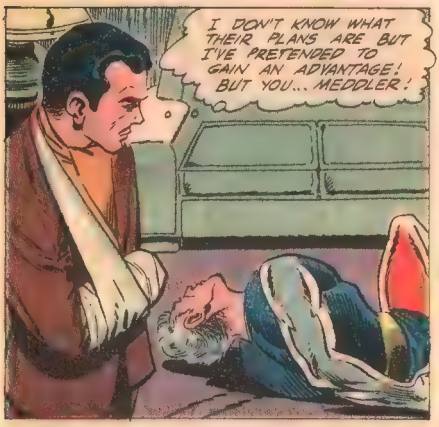
AND AWAY THEY GO... NEVER SUSPECTING THAT A RADIO BEAM IS TRANSMITTING A "HOMING" SIGNAL FROM CAPTAIN ATOM'S BELT SET...

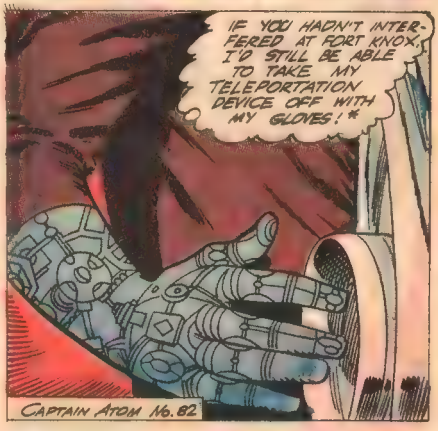

MEANWHILE...
THERE'S SOME GRASS THAT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS TRAMPLED! AND YET IT GROWS STRAIGHT FROM THERE ON AS IF THE MAN WERE PICKED UP INTO THE AIR. THERE'S MY RADIO SIGNAL!

WHAT'S UP, CHARLIE?
NO REPORT FROM CAPTAIN ATOM BUT HE'S BEEN SENDING OUT A RADIO BEAM FOR OVER AN HOUR NOW AND IT'S FINALLY SETTLED AT... CONEY ISLAND!

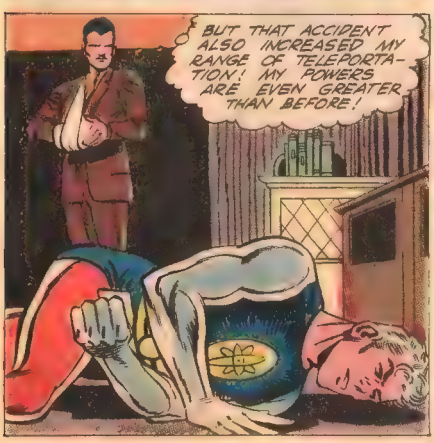
IN THE STRANGE VEHICLE DESIGNED FOR HER BY THE C.I.A., NIGHTSHADE HEADS FOR CONEY ISLAND...
SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED TO COLL AND CAPTAIN ATOM! I BETTER GET THERE FAST!
AT THAT MOMENT, PUNCH AND JEWELEE ARRIVE BACK AT THEIR AMUSEMENT PARK HIDEOUT...
I'LL LEAD COLL IN! BE CAREFUL WITH CAPTAIN ATOM!
PUT HIM IN WITH ROIS! AFTER YOU GET RID OF THE 'COPTER, WE'LL START THE FINAL PHASE OF OUR PLAN!
STILL NOT... VERY STRONG... BUT I'VE GOT TO... STOP THEM ... SOMEHOW!
HE WAS PLAYING POSSUM! BUT THIS GEM OUGHT TO BLIND HIM WHILE YOU USE THOSE STING STRINGS FULL FORCE ON HIM, PUNCH!
AIIIEEE!!
ELECTRIFYING, ISN'T IT?







CAPTAIN ATOM No. 82



MEANWHILE, NIGHTSHADE HAS REACHED CONEY ISLAND. AND SPOTS PUNCH AS HE RETURNS FROM HAVING DROPPED THE COPTER INTO THE SEA!
LOOKS DESERTED... WAIT!
WHAT'S THAT?

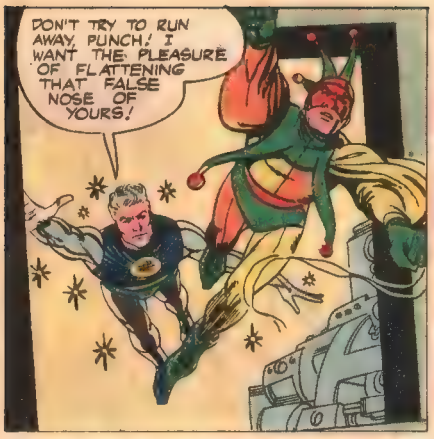
BETTER TURN ON THE VOLTAGE TO... ERR... DISCOURAGE INTRUDERS!
OH, OH! AN ELECTRIC FENCE! BUT I'VE GOT TO GET IN... CAPTAIN ATOM MAY BE IN THERE!

I'M TAKING A DANGEROUS CHANCE BUT I'LL HAVE TO USE THAT DREADFUL POWER AGAIN IF I'M TO SAVE CAPTAIN ATOM! THE BUTTON...

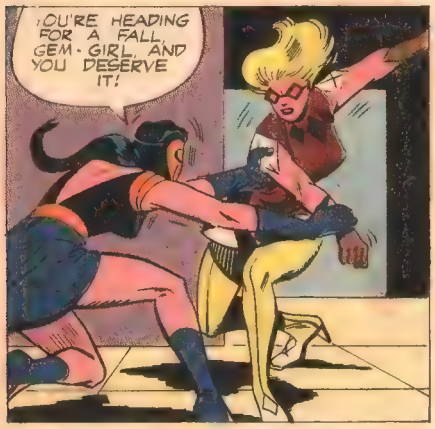
NIGHTSHADE PRESSES A BUTTON ON HER BELT AND A MYSTERIOUS TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE! THE DARLING OF DARKNESS DISAPPEARS... AND IN THE SPOT WHERE SHE STOOD IS ONLY A... SHADOW! *
* TO BE EXPLAINED IN A LATER ISSUE

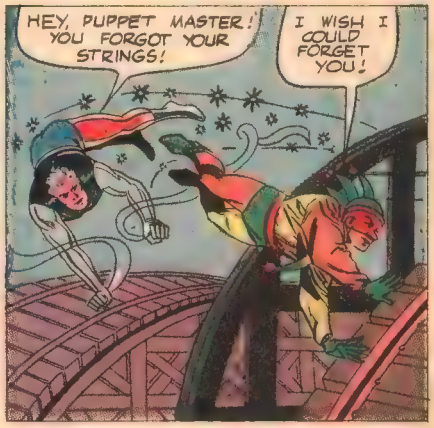
MEANWHILE, WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THEIR LABORATORY, THE SCHEME OF PUNCH AND JEWELEE IS ABOUT TO BEAR FRUIT. IF IT SUCCEEDS, IT WILL LEAVE STUNNED AND BOUND CAPTAIN ATOM IN A DEVICE THAT WILL RENDER HIM MINDLESS...
AS AN EVIL SCIENTIST WOULD SAY," WELCOME TO MY LABORATORY, CAPTAIN ATOM!"
CUT THE CLOWNING, PUNCH! TAKE THIS SPARE RECORDING MOLD AND LET'S GET STARTED!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO ISN'T IN A SPELL FROM MY GEMS CAPTAIN ATOM! I WANTED YOU TO BE AWARE OF YOUR MIND SLOWLY DRAINING OUT OF YOU!
ALL THE GREAT SCIENTIFIC MINDS OF THE WORLD ARE ON OUR RECORDINGS! WE'LL SELL THE INFORMATION TO ANY INTERESTED GOVERNMENT! HAVING YOUR MIND WILL BE THE CROWNING TOUCH!
AND AS JEWELEE BOASTS OF THE PLAN, THE SHADOW OF NIGHTSHADE CREEPS BEHIND HER...
...AND NONE OF YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT US!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, YOU REFUGEE FROM THE DIAMOND MART!
WHO... WHA... WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
14

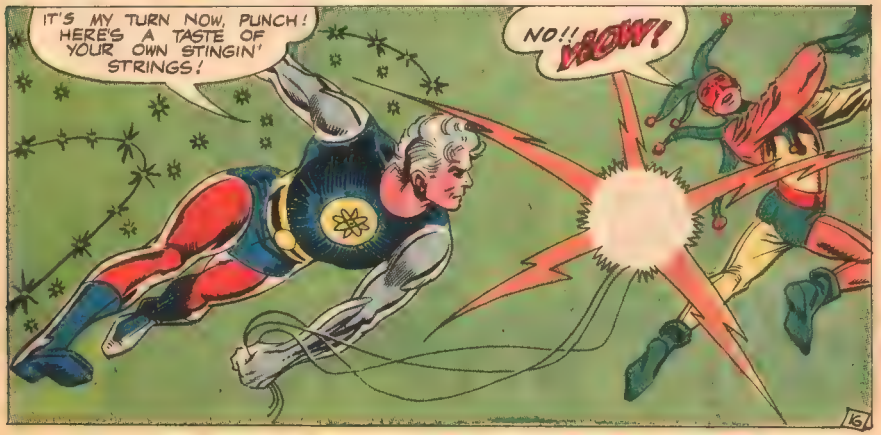
NIGHTSHADE! CAN'T STOP TO FIGURE OUT WHERE SHE CAME FROM! GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE AND HELP HER!
TIME TO EVEN UP THE SIDES HERE! AND WITH SOME OF MY POWERS BACK, WE'VE GOT THE ADVANTAGE!
DARKNESS IS YOUR WORLD! LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I THROW A "LITTLE LIGHT" ON YOU!
ACTING UP AGAIN, CAPTAIN ATOM? I'LL JUST HAVE TO STRING YOU UP TIGHTER THIS TIME!
WE'LL SEE WHO STRINGS ALONG WHO THIS TIME, PUNCH!
WHILE THEY'RE BUSY BATTLING IT OUT, I'LL TELEPORT SOME OF THOSE SMALLER DEVICES TO MY LAB!
15


DON'T TRY TO RUN AWAY, PUNCH! I WANT THE PLEASURE OF FLATTENING THAT FALSE NOSE OF YOURS!

IF I GET ANY BETTER AT THIS, I'LL JOIN THE RADIO CITY ROCKETTES!


;OU'RE HEADING FOR A FALL, GEM-GIRL, AND YOU DESERVE IT!


HEY, PUPPET MASTER! YOU FORGOT YOUR STRINGS!
I WISH I COULD FORGET YOU!


IT'S MY TURN NOW, PUNCH! HERE'S A TASTE OF YOUR OWN STINGIN' STRINGS!
NO!! WOW!

SORRY, I CAN'T STAY!
I'LL BE ABLE TO LOSE HIM IN HERE!
WHEN THIS GUY RUNS, HE RUNS!
YOU CAN'T LOSE ME PUNCH!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!
THAT'S ONE PUNCH THAT PUNCH REALLY DESERVES!
WITH THE UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF PUNCH, CAPTAIN ATOM RETURNS TO THE LAIR OF PUNCH AND JEWELEE AND FINDS THAT NIGHTSHADE HAS HER END UNDER CONTROL, TOO!
THIS CLOWN TRIED TO GET AWAY IN THE TUNNEL OF LOVE!
AS SOON AS THESE MEN ARE FREE, I'LL RADIO TO HQs AND ASK FOR A DOCTOR! ROIS LOOKS A BIT SHOOK UP!

CONTINUED AFTER THE NEXT PAGE

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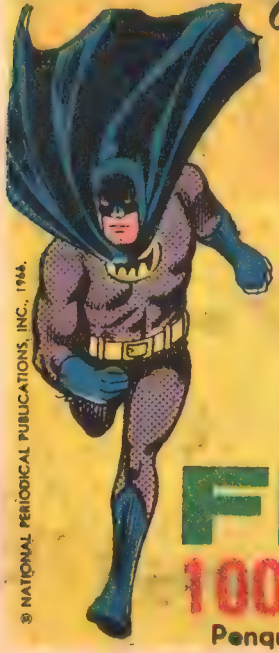

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AND WHILE THE HEROIC PAIR GO ABOUT HELPING THE HYPNOTIZED MEN, JEWELEE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS AND MAKES A BREAK FOR FREEDOM.!
IF I CAN ONLY GET THAT ILLUSION GEM OUT, I'LL BE IN THE CLEAR!
NIGHTSHADE, JEWELEE'S AWAKE!
I COULD STOP HER BUT SHE DESERVES TO GO FREE! JAIL WOULDN'T LOOK GOOD ON HER!
I'LL BE BACK TO MAKE YOUR LIFE MISERABLE, HEROES! JUST WAIT AND SEE!
AND CREATING AN ILLUSION OF A MASSIVE EXPLOSION, JEWELEE ESCAPES UNDER THE COVER OF IT!
ANOTHER CASE ENDED, OUR TWO WEARY HEROES HEAD BACK TO THEIR NORMAL LIVES TO REST UP BEFORE THEY ARE CALLED INTO ACTION AGAIN! BUT SEVERAL PERSONS ARE THINKING ABOUT THEM... AND NOT VERY KINDLY!
THEY MADE A FOOL OUT OF PUNCH THIS TIME, BUT I'LL GET THEM NEXT TIME!
WITH THESE GEMS, I OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO DREAM UP A SCHEME TO BEST THOSE TWO!
THE GHOST IS ABOUT READY TO APPEAR AGAIN! BEWARE, CAPTAIN ATOM AND NIGHTSHADE!
THAT CAPTAIN ATOM! I'LL FIX THAT GLORY HOG IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO OR MY NAME ISN'T ABBY LADD!
NEXT ISSUE...
THE GHOST STEPS BACK INTO THE SPOTLIGHT! USING HIS WILD TELEPORTATION POWERS AND THE INVENTIONS STOLEN FROM PUNCH AND JEWELEE, THE GHOST IS MORE POWERFUL THAN EVER! DON'T MISS
THE FURY OF THE FACELESS FOE
IN CAPTAIN ATOM ISSUE 86
THE END

Dear Editor:

I am very pleased that Charlton Comics has advanced from a childish line of heroes to the producer of the most sophisticated line of super stars yet.

So great is the improvement in your mags, it even tops the improvement made in Radio Comics in the past year.

The team of Ditko-Mastroserio is superb. Number 83's cover was an eye catcher for everyone.

Captain's Column was a much needed improvement, but nothing in the book surpassed the Blue Beetle story, far superior to the old outlandishly juvenile hero. What I like most about B.B. is his costume. Again, my compliments to Steve Ditko. Give that boy a raise! By all means, let's see more of that fabulously new B.B.!

Bill Greenhouse
Hicksville, New York

Dear Editor:

Having read CAPTAIN ATOM No. 84, I decided to write and tell you what I thought of the conclusion of last issue's "Finally Falls the Mighty". "After the Fall, a New Beginning" was everything the previous issue led you to expect: a Charlton Classic. I am glad to see his powers haven't changed to any great extent, but the change in costume was long overdue. The idea of having a hero unmasked but still retaining his secret identity is a new and refreshing one. I'm glad to see he doesn't have to wear that bulky uniform any more. His new, light weight garb will give him greater freedom of movement than he's ever known before. In other words, the word on your new Captain Atom is go! As for the Blue Beetle, I'm glad to see you give him an identity and a hide-out. But, what a hide-out. Wow! Let's see more of it. Glad to see you bring Dan Garret into the plot, but I hope he wasn't really murdered. I was hoping for a team-up in the near future.

Robert Kowalski
Detroit, Michigan

Dear Editor:

When I first started buying comics I read many different kinds. Charlton, Marvel, D.C., etc. During that time I thought there couldn't be anything worse than Charlton! But during the past months I have witnessed the greatest change in comic book history. Charlton's Captain Atom, Judomaster, Thunderbolt, Fightin' 5 and Blue Beetle have put your comics on the verge of being a great success! The artwork, lettering and inking have improved and have given you a great boost! The plots and stories are better and the addition of your letter pages is a great success. Keep up the good, or should I say, great work!

Stephen Lipinski
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Editor:

I have often admired Steve Ditko for his art and inventive genius in the comic book field, but never...and I repeat NEVER has he turned anything out like the "NEW" Blue Beetle. Not only did it turn out to be highly original, but the supposed tie-in between the new and old Blue Beetle was something else!

Ditko and Gary Friedrich successfully tied in a moving plot along with enough information to give the reader a slight taste of B.B. and his mechanized world. There was only one thing wrong with the story...mainly, it was far too short! Only several pages every two months is definitely not enough and of all your new characters, the new B.B. is the first to deserve his own book!

Many good and nice things have been said about Charlton since the entire line has been revamped, but the best description possible would be NUMBER ONE! If some think you're far from it, I beg them to only wait a few months and then they, too, will board the Charlton band wagon! Keep Blue Beetle, Captain Atom, Judomaster and the rest coming -- can't get my fill!!

Gary Brown
Tampa, Florida

THE VOICE OF DISSENT

Dear Editor:

Who is the character who occupies the book with Ditko's great new Blue Beetle and calls himself Captain Atom? He can hardly compare to the Captain who once graced these pages, let alone go by the same name. This rude figure in a gaudy costume is typical of the average super-hero: he is very young, immature, and is constantly telling jokes. Joking is fine in the right instances, but when the whole story is one big comedy skit, the magazine loses all its applicability, effectiveness and realism.

In the first stories (STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES No. 75) Captain Adam was young and serious; when he became Captain Atom he was a more mature and forceful man. Captain Adam longed to be normal, but knew that was impossible. He had a savage power which was hard to control. This power had to be unleashed in the form of Captain Atom.

From the start Captain Atom was too powerful to be an earth superhero. Preventing disasters and fighting super-villains were old hat even then, but stories of adventure on other worlds had hardly begun. Having the Captain fly from planet to planet is out, since then he would be flying in the vacuum of space, which has no matter. This would force him to use his own body as fuel, and that would be disastrous. If he flew in a space ship between planets, he could still have exciting adventures.

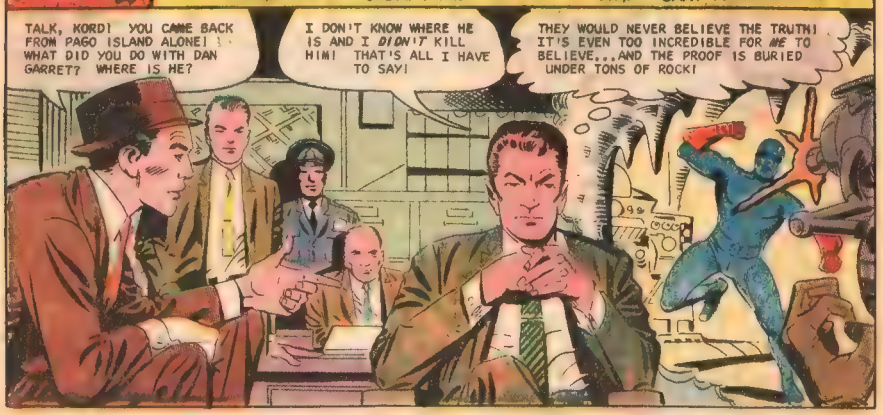
I'm sure the fans have heard of ADAM STRANGE. If D.C. was successful with such a different strip in a time when comics were not very popular, surely Charlton can have such a strip in these days when comics are reaching new heights of greatness!

John Angell
Winston-Salem, N.C.

We'll print intelligent comments, pro and con, concerning this letter. What do you think?

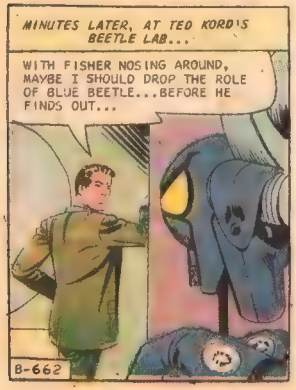
THE BLUE BEETLE

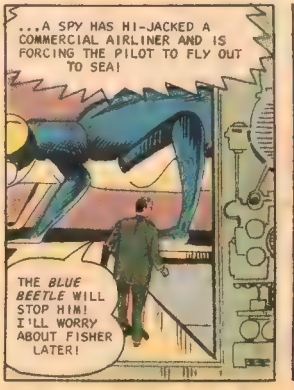
concept and art: STEVE DITKO script: GARY FRIEDRICH


TALK, KORD! YOU CAME BACK FROM PAGO ISLAND ALONE! WHAT DID YOU DO WITH DAN GARRET? WHERE IS HE?
I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS AND I *DIDN'T* KILL HIM! THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY!
THEY WOULD NEVER BELIEVE THE TRUTH! IT'S EVEN TOO INCREDIBLE FOR *ME* TO BELIEVE...AND THE PROOF IS BURIED UNDER TONS OF ROCK!

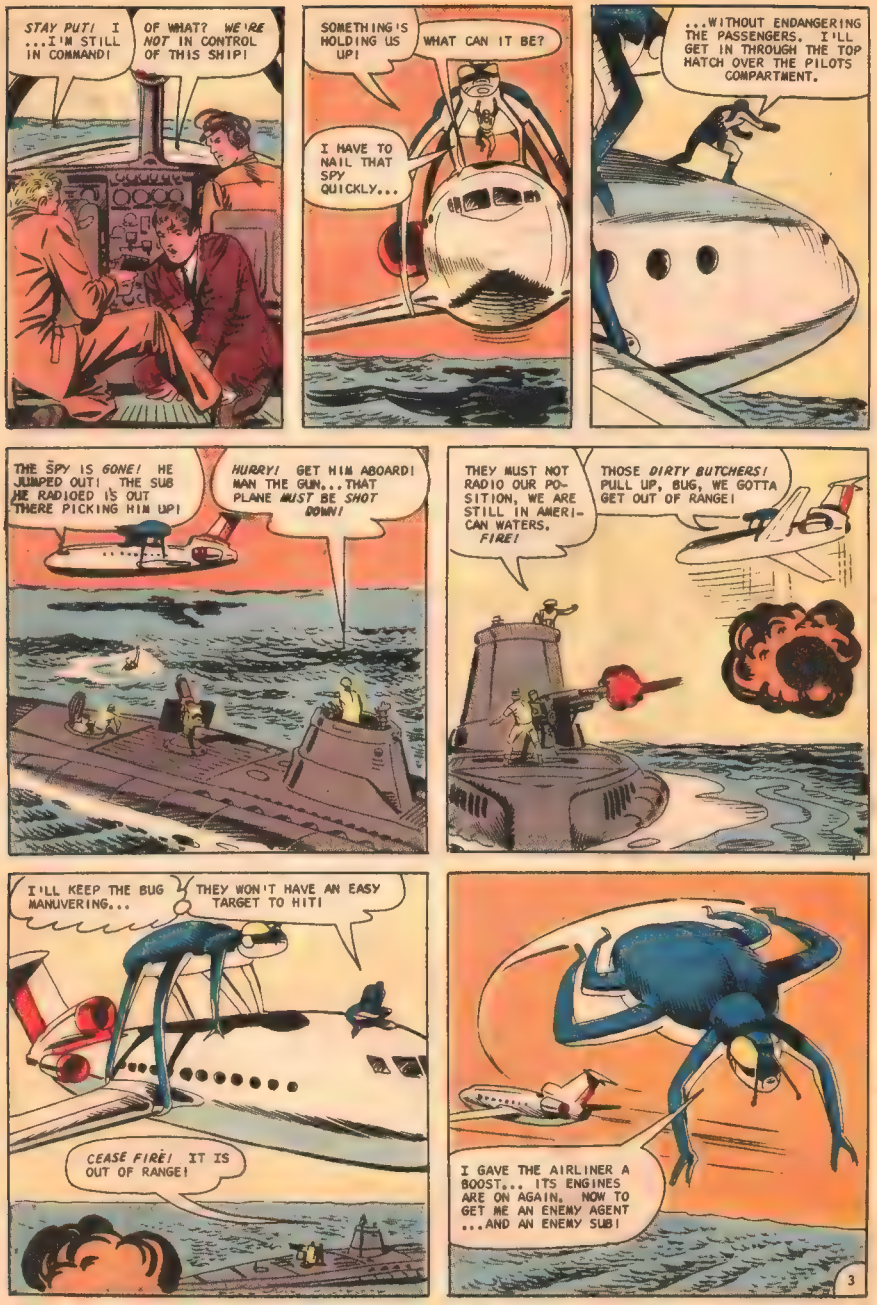
LET HIM GO, FISHER... IT'S NO USE!
OKAY, KORD, WE CAN'T HOLD YOU! BUT I'LL BE WATCHING YOU UNTIL THE MYSTERY OF DAN GARRET'S DISAPPEARANCE AND YOUR PART IN IT IS CLEANED UP!

MEANWHILE, AN INCOMING JET-LINER DROPS INTO ITS APPROACH PATTERN...
CONTROL TO FLIGHT 729...YOU HAVE A DANGEROUS AGENT ABOARD. USE EMERGENCY RUN-WAY 3. SECURITY WILL BE WAITING!
ROGER, CONTROL...*HEY*, YOU CAN'T...*WATCH IT CAP*... HE'S GOT A *GUN*!
YA! NOW SHUT UP AND LISTEN!


MINUTES LATER, AT TED KORD'S BEETLE LAB...
WITH FISHER NOSING AROUND, MAYBE I SHOULD DROP THE ROLE OF BLUE BEETLE...BEFORE HE FINDS OUT...
B-662


...A SPY HAS HI-JACKED A COMMERCIAL AIRLINER AND IS FORCING THE PILOT TO FLY OUT TO SEA!
THE *BLUE BEETLE* WILL STOP HIM! I'LL WORRY ABOUT FISHER LATER!

A SHORT TIME LATER...
SOMETHING'S WRONG! THE AIRLINER IS OUT OF CONTROL!
YOU FOOLS!
LET GO OF ME... AND TELL HIM TO PULL UP OR WE'LL ALL DIE!
YOU WEREN'T PLANNING TO LET US GO ANYWAY.
BRACE YOURSELVES ...WE'RE GOING DOWN!
SOMEBODY SAVE US!
WE'RE DOOMED!
I'VE GOT TO PUSH THE BEETLE SHIP TO ITS LIMITS...AND IT STILL MAY NOT BE ENOUGH!
I'LL ONLY GET ONE SHOT AT IT...HERE GOES!
...EXTEND BACK LEGS...HOOK ON...
...AND PULL UP...UP...UP WHEW! MADE IT! ANOTHER COUPLE OF FEET AND WE WOULD HAVE ALL GONE INTO THE DRINK!
WHAT HAPPENED?? WE'RE LEVELING OFF!
SOMETHING'S HOLDING UP THE PLANE!
WE'RE SAVED!
2


STAY PUT! I ...I'M STILL IN COMMAND!
OF WHAT? WE'RE NOT IN CONTROL OF THIS SHIP!
SOMETHING'S HOLDING US UP!
WHAT CAN IT BE?
I HAVE TO NAIL THAT SPY QUICKLY...
...WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE PASSENGERS, I'LL GET IN THROUGH THE TOP HATCH OVER THE PILOTS COMPARTMENT.
THE SPY IS GONE! HE JUMPED OUT! THE SUB HE RADIOED IS OUT THERE PICKING HIM UP!
HURRY! GET HIM ABOARD! MAN THE GUN...THAT PLANE MUST BE SHOT DOWN!
THEY MUST NOT RADIO OUR POSITION, WE ARE STILL IN AMERICAN WATERS. FIRE!
THOSE DIRTY BUTCHERS! PULL UP, BUG, WE GOTTA GET OUT OF RANGE!
I'LL KEEP THE BUG MANUVERING...
THEY WON'T HAVE AN EASY TARGET TO HIT!
CEASE FIRE! IT IS OUT OF RANGE!
I GAVE THE AIRLINER A BOOST... ITS ENGINES ARE ON AGAIN. NOW TO GET ME AN ENEMY AGENT ...AND AN ENEMY SUB!
3

I'M GOING TO DO SOME FISHING... FOR THAT SUB!
I CAN'T SEE IT...BUT THE RADAR ANTENNA WILL FIND IT FOR ME!
NO SIGNAL YET...IT HAS TO BE WITHIN THIS WIDE CIRCLE I'M MAKING! IT HAS TO BE!
OH, OH! GOT SOMETHING! IT'S BIG...AND IT'S MOVING...IT'S GOT TO BE THE SUB! OR A MIGHTY BIG FISH!
THERE SHE IS! I'LL LOCK THE ANTENNA ON IT!
SONAR CONTACT, CAPTAIN! WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED BY SOMETHING...BUT I CAN'T TELL WHAT IT IS!
PREPARE TO STOP ENGINES!
NOW I HAVE TO KEEP THEM FROM GETTING AWAY! I SHOULD HAVE EQUIPMENT BACK HERE TO DO THE JOB!
I'M FINDING OUT THAT IN THIS BUSINESS, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO DO A JOB! BEING PREPARED FOR ANYTHING IS HALF THE BATTLE...I HOPE!
4

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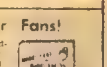

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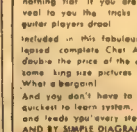

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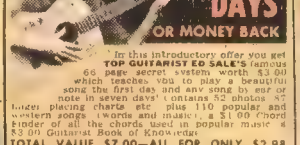

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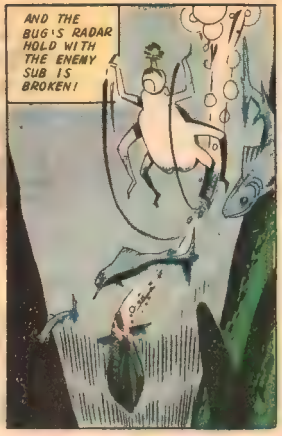
THE SUB'S STOPPING! I BETTER GET FIRST LICKS...BEFORE THEY COME UP WITH A FEW WRINKLES OF THEIR OWN!
IF I HIT THE MARK, ONE BLAST FROM THIS UNDERWATER BAZOOKA WILL DO THE JOB!
WITHOUT ITS SCREWS THE ONLY THING THE SUB WILL BE ABLE TO DO IS SURFACE!
GOT IT! NOW, THE OTHER ONE!
FROGMEN! I'LL BOUNCE THE SECOND SHOT OFF THE HULL! THE SHOCK WAVES WILL DAZE THEM!
NOW TO KEEP THEM OFF BALANCE! SHOULD BE EASY... IT'S ONLY TWO AGAINST ONE.
NOW, WE DON'T MAKE THIS TOO EASY, FELLAS!
UNGHH!
AH, HA! THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THE BATTLING BEETLE. NOW TO FIND MY BAZOOKA AND FINISH THE JOB!

GUPPIES! THEY'RE TRYING TO NAVIGATE WITH ONE SCREW! THE SUB HAS RAMMED INTO THOSE ROCKS!
SHE'S TAKING WATER! AND PULLING MY LOCKED ON BUG DOWN WITH HER! HEY, COME BACK HERE!
ALL RIGHT, SO I'LL HAVE TO GO DOWN AFTER YOU! I'VE GOT TO GET TO THE BUG AND SWITCH OFF THE ANTENNA LOCK. HEY, WHA...!!?
C-CAN'T FIGHT IT...UNGH... ONLY CHANCE IS THE BUG... FIRST...
...I HAVE TO FREE IT FROM THE SINKING SUB! IF-IF I CAN ONLY REACH...

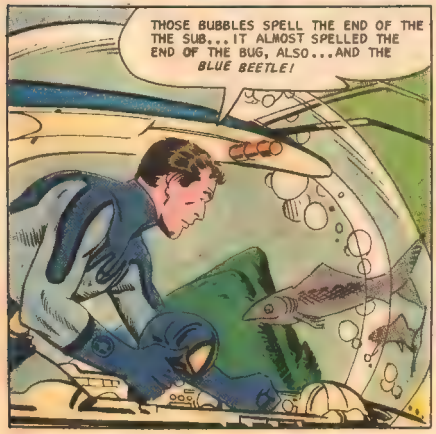
MAKING A DESPERATE EFFORT, THE BLUE BEETLE MANAGES TO TOUCH THE REMOTE CONTROL PANEL UNDER THE GLOVE INSIGNIA WITH HIS FINGER TIP ACTIVATOR...
...A SIGNAL GOES OUT...

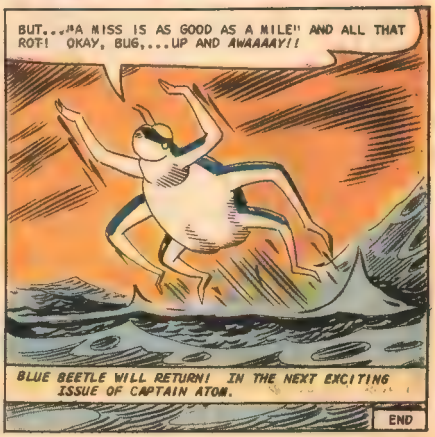

AND THE BUG'S RADAR HOLD WITH THE ENEMY SUB IS BROKEN!

UNNH... BLACKING OUT...GOT TO... LINE UP ANTENNA RIGHT ON...THE ...OCTOPUS!

CAN'T DELAY...HERE GOES! AHHH! THE ELECTRICAL SHOCK MADE THE OCTOPUS LOOSEN HIS GRIP... I'M ALMOST FREE!

ONE MORE CHARGE SHOULD DO IT! THERE! THE GREEN BEAST IS BACKING AWAY!


THOSE BUBBLES SPELL THE END OF THE THE SUB...IT ALMOST SPELLED THE END OF THE BUG, ALSO...AND THE BLUE BEETLE!


BUT..."A MISS IS AS GOOD AS A MILE" AND ALL THAT ROT! OKAY, BUG,...UP AND AWAAAAY!!
BLUE BEETLE WILL RETURN! IN THE NEXT EXCITING ISSUE OF CAPTAIN ATOM.
END

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says *Ben Rebhuhn*

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